

REMARKS

Claims 1-25 are pending. Claims 1, 8, 11, 17, 21 and 22 are amended. Dependent claims 23-25 are newly added. The remaining claims are unchanged. The new claims are supported by the application as originally filed, and no new matter has been added.

Applicant's attorney thanks Examiner Rimell for the kind assistance extended to Applicant in the telephone interview on March 3, 2005.

In the Office Action, claims 1-22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as anticipated by Klots et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,144,983).

In the discussion of claim 1, the Office Action stated that "[t]he method steps recited in lines 8-10 are optionally recited by the usage of an 'if' clause and thus are accorded no patentable weight." Claims 1 and the other independent method claims have been amended to clarify the unconditional nature of the steps recited in those claims. Applicant's attorney discussed these amendments with the Examiner in the March 3rd interview, and the Examiner indicated that the amendments were satisfactory in this regard.

With respect to newly amended independent claims 1 and 21, the Examiner indicated the patentability of those claims in view of Klots, in the March 3rd interview.

Claim 21, by way of example, recites:

A computer-implemented method for acquiring access to an object in an object-based system, the method comprising:
providing a thread that attempts to acquire access to an object;
identifying a memory address value associated with the object;
identifying a first synchronization construct that is suitable for use in granting access to the object;
determining that the first synchronization construct is unavailable;
when it is determined that the first synchronization construct is unavailable, determining that the thread that is attempting to acquire access to the object is already associated with the object; and
when it is determined that the thread that is attempting to acquire access to the object is already associated with the object, releasing the association such that the thread is not associated with the object. (Emphasis added.)

To summarize, as explained in the March 3rd interview, Klots fails to disclose or suggest the feature of "when it is determined that the thread that is attempting to acquire access to the object is already associated with the object, releasing the association such that the thread is not

associated with the object,” as recited in claim 21. While Klots describes releasing a lock held on a hash bucket by a process (Fig. 4, steps 432, 438), Klots suggests doing so only after modifying a previously granted lock to a new lock (i.e., finer grain to coarser grain, or coarser grain to finer grain) on the same hash bucket by the same process. That is, the hash buckets described in Klots remain locked by the requesting process during the lock escalation and de-escalation process, including the time at which the previously granted lock is released. Accordingly, the lock modification technique of Klots does not include the feature of “releasing the association such that the thread is not associated with the object,” as recited in claim 21. Instead, applying the teachings of Klots, any association would be maintained, rather than released.

Applicant respectfully submits that newly amended independent claims 8, 11, 17 and 22 are patentable for similar reasons as claims 1 and 21. Claim 8, for example, recites that “the at least one lock can be released such that the object is not locked by the at least one locking thread in response to a determination that the at least one locking thread is the same thread as the at least one thread.” (Emphasis added). Again, according to Klots, the hash buckets remain locked by the requesting process during the lock escalation and de-escalation process, including the time at which the previously granted lock is released. Because claim 8 includes the feature of releasing the lock such that the object is not locked by the at least one locking thread, Klots fails to anticipate claim 8 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e).

The remaining dependent claims incorporate all of the features of the independent claims on which the dependent claims are based. Therefore, by virtue of their dependency, the dependent claims are patentable for at least the same reasons as the independent claims.

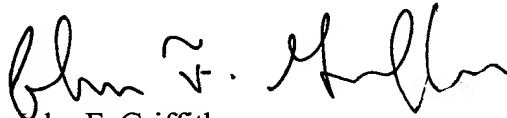
CONCLUSION

In view of the above Amendments and Remarks, Applicant submits that the above-identified application is in condition for allowance. Early notification to that effect is respectfully requested.

Should the Examiner believe that a further telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of this application, Applicant's attorney respectfully requests that the Examiner contact him by telephone at the number below.

Respectfully submitted,

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John F. Griffith', is written over the printed name.

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